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The second Paper read was—

2. *General Historical View of the State of Human Society in Northern Central Africa.* By PHIL. DR. H. BARTH, F.R.G.S.

THIS paper is a condensed summary of the existing state of knowledge about the whole of Northern Africa, excepting only the Nilotic valley and the Western Coast. It is illustrated by a map, variously shaded and marked with dotted lines, to indicate at a glance the geographical arrangement of its subject matter. Dr. Barth commences with physical geography, and traces the outline and configuration of the Sahara. It is a sandstone or granitic plateau, raised from 1000 to 1400 feet above the sea level, and dotted over with mountainous districts, where rain water is caught by the hills and retained in the valleys, and human habitation rendered possible. These oases are of the utmost importance to the maintenance of great lines of commerce from the Mediterranean to the interior, but in themselves they are unhealthy spots and are hot beds of fever, in proportion to the abundance of their waters.

The available lines of commerce are further marked out by great bands of shifting sand hills, which form an insurmountable barrier to caravans, except at certain known spots. Moisture collects in the troughs between the sand ridges, date palms are found in them, and

of population going on at present in Australia, in ten or fifteen years Tropical Australia will be occupied by English flock-owners to the 12th parallel of latitude; and in less than half that time, if a trading settlement be established on the north coast.

Mr. Crawford doubts my account of the fertility of the soil, because it is represented as a sandstone country. He may on the same grounds doubt the fertility of the counties of Yorkshire, Northumberland, and Durham—in fact any part of England where coal fields exist; but it should have been remembered that the table-land and ranges alone represent the really sandstone country, none of which is included in the estimated 5,000,000 acres of good pasture drained by the Victoria. The wild rice found by me was a different variety from that cultivated by the Malays, and was 300 miles in a straight line from their nearest fishery; that found by Dr. Mueller was 500 miles distant, and on a different water parting; nor am I aware of any rice being found near their fisheries. Besides, Mr. Crawford is in error in saying the fishermen bring their rice with them in the husk. In such case they would require to carry their husking-mills with them, which would be equivalent to our taking thrashing machines, flour-mills, and wheat in the ear, to use on a voyage to Australia. There are many thousands of acres in North Australia better suited for rice, in regard both to soil and water, than some I have seen used for that crop in Timor. If 20 years' experience, principally in the wilds of Australia, be not worth naming, I may indeed be considered a stranger to Australia, to sandstone country, and to fertile soil. Finally it is not necessary that the working people in North Australia should be Chinese or Sepoys. There are many thousand Christianized natives on the islands of Ombay, Kisa, and Rotté, besides people from many other islands, that would gladly move to North Australia for employment, and would settle there with their families.

I am, Sir, &c., &c.,

J. S. WILSON.

a small population exists. There are numerous other regions which are covered with isolated sand hills. Over the whole of the Sahara the temperature ranges between the extraordinarily wide limits of 80° Fahr., between maximum and minimum.

The fertile districts south of the Sahara are by no means so monotonous as they are usually considered to be. Bornu is certainly flat; it is alluvial, like the plain of the Ganges or of the Indus, but the countries on either side of it contain mountains of 5000 or 6000 feet. There is also a vast mountainous region which feeds the sources of the Senegal, Gambia, and Niger, of which we have no positive knowledge.

The population of North Africa appears to have been fed by three streams. One stream from Syria to the far west, and thence thrown back by the Atlantic; another supervening stream, that of the Berber or Tuarick race, also from the East, and afterwards thrown Southwards into the desert, where it still preponderates in excess; and, thirdly, one from Arabia, through Sennaar, that has met the former streams and incorporated itself with them between the 5th and 15th degrees of North latitude. Great stress is laid upon the fact that nearly all the tribes contain two fundamentally distinct races, the black and the red.

A condensed description is given of the intellectual and national characteristics of the great North African races, namely, the Berber, Mandingoe, Fulbe (Fellatah), Hausa, Kanuri (or Bornu), Tebu (Tibboo), Yoruba Nufe, Dahomey and Ashanti, Tombo Mosi, Baghirmi, Wadai, Darfur. The most important of these, in regard to European commerce, are the Berbers, who form a connecting link between numerous and distant races; the Fulbe, because of their importance along the Niger; the Hausa, for their distribution throughout North Central Africa, their liveliness and intelligence; and the Yoruba Nufe, on account of the position of their country by the unhealthy districts of the mouths of the Niger, and for their industry and capacity. Little is known, even by hearsay, of the Pagan nations south of those that are mentioned in the above list. We hear of Banda and of Andoma; Batta is now broken up.

The density of population, in each portion of North Africa, is estimated by Dr. Barth as nearly as his knowledge admits, and is recorded in the map. As a general average, taking the populous kingdoms and their thinly inhabited border districts together, the whole country south of the Sahara is more densely populated than either Marocco or Algeria.

The commercial importance of different districts is next examined, and the great commercial centres of ancient and modern times are

pointed out. Most decided preference is given, on many accounts, to the Niger route over that of the tedious desert caravans.

The religions of North Africa, and the spread of Islamism (originally introduced into Negroland by the Berber race), are, lastly, considered.

DR. WORTHINGTON, F.R.G.S.—I should be glad to be informed by Dr. Barth whether he realised as matter of fact an important point often stated, that the complexion of the black natives materially alters in mountainous countries? And further whether he has any idea as to the general character of the black complexion, and whether when the natives pass from the inter-tropical regions their complexion varies on sojourn correspondently with that of the country into which they move?

DR. BARTH, F.R.G.S.—In some respects I think the level and character of the country have really some influence upon the colour of its inhabitants. We find the *Jolof* settled in the delta of the Senegal and the Gambia, and they are the blackest race of Western Central Africa. We find the *Kanuri*, the very blackest race of those regions, settled round the Chád. The *Jolof* and the *Fulbe* or *Fúlas* are the same race. The *Fúlas*, who in general are the inhabitants of more elevated regions than the *Jolof*, are not so dark as the latter: they are besides also far more slender than the *Jolof*. That certainly may be due to an intermixture with the *Sissilbe* and other tribes. But with regard to Africa, it is very remarkable that tribes settled in low lands have generally a darker complexion than those settled in high lands. Yet as we find this intermixture of blacker and lighter complexion among tribes settled in the same country, I think it is not quite certain that such a difference of colour is in some measure due to the level or any other influence of the region which they inhabit or have inhabited at a former period. In some respects it may be so. In that great amalgamation of various tribes in North Central Africa it is very difficult to say what may have been the original colour of each tribe. However, we find the black-coloured Negro tribe already distinctly represented as the type of a separate race of mankind on the monuments of Egypt.

DR. WORTHINGTON.—I am glad of this explanation, because it shows that colour in a great measure arises from climate. Of course we have varieties. We know perfectly well that the Siah Poosh are white, though amongst dark Hindoos. The *Dendos* are perfectly white, although amongst the black inhabitants of Congo. We have black Jews in Hindostan and in Cochin China, and we have these varieties of the human complexion constantly arising. It would, therefore, seem that complexion is almost an accident dependent on local circumstances—an accident of the position in which a man is placed, and not the result of a colouring membrane only, as it was commonly supposed to be.

MR. CRAWFURD, F.R.G.S.—I differ totally from the gentleman who has spoken, and also from Dr. Barth. I will give you a few examples. African negroes have been settled in various parts of America up to the 30th and 35th degree, even to the 40th degree of latitude, and they are of the same colour, have the same form of features, and are the same people that they were when they were brought from Congo and other countries near the Equator. The native Americans, from Tierra del Fuego up to Hudson Bay, are all red; there is no difference in their complexion. Climate, therefore, elevation or lowness of soil, the level of the Equator or the table land of the Andes, have made no difference in their complexion. I will mention another fact. The Chinese are a yellow coloured people. They are the same complexion at Canton in 22° of latitude that they are at Pekin in the 40th degree of latitude. Whether the land be mountainous or whether it be on the level of the sea, it matters not; the complexion is not altered, nor is the physical form in any degree whatever.

Again, there is the instance I have given of the Spaniards who have been 300 years settled in various parts of America, sometimes on the table land of the Andes, and sometimes upon the very level of the sea, almost on the Equator ; they are the same complexion that they were when they quitted Aragon and Andalusia. Then there are the Parsees of Hindostan. They migrated from Persia about one thousand years ago. They have kept themselves free from admixture with the Indians, and they are as fair at this day as when they left the mountains of Persia, although they are settled at Bombay in the 18th degree of latitude. Mention has been made of the Jews who have settled in India. There are two classes of Jews. There are the white Jews, who have kept themselves pure, and who at this day, though settled as far down in Hindostan as the Deccan, in the 18th degree of latitude, are as fair as the Jews in Palestine. But, then, there are what are called black Jews. These are converts, the descendants of people that have mixed with the lowest classes of the Hindoos, and they are properly speaking of the Hindoo race. There is no such thing as a change of complexion on their part. The white Jews are as white as when they left Palestine, and the black Jews are as black as the rest of the Hindoos, of which stock they are composed. The same may be said of the Portuguese. It is said,—See how black the Portuguese have become in India ! Not at all. The Portuguese who have kept themselves pure from Indian admixture are as fair as Portuguese in Portugal. Those who usually go under the name of Portuguese are converted Hindoos with Portuguese names. They are of the lowest castes of Hindoos ; and very often they are blacker than the ordinary race of Hindoos. Depend upon it neither the form nor the complexion is changed by climate.

DR. WORTHINGTON.—I beg to say that Mr. Crawford is contradicted in that opinion by most of the travellers that I have spoken to on the subject. The Arabs and Jews are justly admitted to be the two nations that never mingle with others. Yet we have black Arabs of the Jordan ; and we have black Jews in Hindostan, retaining, in every possible character except the complexion, the Jewish physiognomy ; and what is more, retaining records of their race which stamp them to be Jews at the dispersion.

ADDITIONAL NOTICES.

1. *Mémoire sur le Soudan.* Par M. le Comte d'ESCAVRAC DE LAUTURE. Paris, 1855-6.

THE French conquest of Algeria has eminently directed the attention of French geographers to the exploration of the interior of the African continent, and within the last quarter of a century important additions have certainly been made to our knowledge of that widely extended region. The work before us is a résumé of what is known concerning that part of Central Africa between Lake Chád on the west, and Kordofan on the east, comprising a part of Bornu, the territories of Bagharmi, Wadai, and Darfur, and some others of less consideration ; it has been mainly extracted from the 'Bulletin de la Société de Géographie.' It is accompanied by a chart, embracing the countries between lat. 6° and 16° N., and long. 13° 20' and 31° 20' E., and on which the various routes which have been followed by travellers there are laid down. The same chart includes a portion of the course of the White